(b) if so, the main objectives of the Forum; and

(c) how the Government plan to implement these objectives ?

THE MINISTER OF SCIENCE AND TECHNOLOGY (DR. MURLI MANOHAR JOSHI) : (a) to (c) An Agreement to establish the Indo-US Science and Technology Forum was concluded on March 21, 2000.

The aim of the Forum is to facilitate and promote the interaction in India and the United States of government, academia and industry in science and technology and other related areas. The main objectives of the Forum are :

- to focus on issues of common concern and activities of mutual benefit, while exploring trends in S & T
- to create a comprehensive electronic reference source for Indo-US S&T cooperation
- to promote electronic exchange and dissemination of information and opportunities in bilateral S&T cooperation
- to commission studies, reports and papers and promote Indo-US cooperation in R&D and transfer of technology
- to facilitate and promote joint collaborative projects and programmes and organize workshops, seminars, symposia, courses and training programmes
- to establish Indo-US Centres for excellence at places in India.

To ensure that objectives of the Forum conform to highest standards of excellence, a Governing Body of eminent persons has been established with equal (seven members each) Indian and US representation. The Governing Body consists of highly respected representatives from government, industry, academia and private organizations. It provides guidance and leadership by monitoring present activities and trends in bilateral science and technology cooperation and makes recommendations and identifies priorities and directions for future cooperation. The Governing Body is empowered to constitute advisory groups or committees for specific purposes as required.

Grants to NGOs in NER through CAPART

* 574. DR. ARUN KUMAR SARMA : Will the Minister of AGRICULTURE be pleased to state :

(a) whether it is a fact that Government released Rs. 14 crores to the regional office of CAPART (NEZ), Guwahati for financial grants to various NGOs in all the eight States, including Sikkim, during the year 1999-2000;

(b) if so, the details of the criteria fixed by Government to distribute proportionately the above funds among the North-Eastern States; and

(c) the details of funds released among the States during this period ?

THE MINISTER OF AGRICULTURE (SHRI AJIT SINGH) : (a) CAPART released an amount of Rs. 1.17 crores to the office of Regional Committee, CAPART (NEZ), Guwahati for financial assistance to NGOs in all the North Eastern States including Sikkim, during the year 1999-2000.

(b) No such criteria has been fixed by CAPART to distribute funds proportionately among the North Eastern States. The funds are sanctioned on a project to project basis. With a view to educate the NGOs in the skill of project formulation, workshops are organised as per needs of the area in different States of the North East.

(c) The details of funds released by the Regional Committee of CAPART, Guwahati to the NGOs in the North Eastern States during 1999-2000 are given in the Statement.

Statement

Details of the funds released by Regional Committee of CAPART, Guwahati to NGOs for the year 1999-2000

S. No.	Name of State (s)	Amount Released (in Rupees)
1.	Assam	56,30,515
2.	Arunachal Pradesh	3,99,702
3.	Manipur	41,50,452
4.	Meghalaya	2,25,757
5.	Mizoram	1,27,550
6.	Nagaland	2,47,960
7.	Sikkim	80,325
8.	Tripura	3,76,116
	TOTAL	1,12,38,377